

SN 10/612,283
Amendment Dated 9/21/2007
Reply to OA mailed 9/12/2007

Atty Docket # J103UB02US00

Amendments to the Claims/Listing of the Claims

Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method operable on a computer for automatically selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising the steps of:
storing item characteristics for a plurality of items;
storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics;
receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for a shipment, the shipment comprising at least one package shipping by mail;
retrieving a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items;
storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to specified items;
automatically determining a number of packages comprising the shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package
determining, the determining step carried out based on the identifiers, the stored item characteristics corresponding to the identifiers and the postal costs for packages, _____ selected characteristic, if a single package containing the plurality of items will exceed a desired postal rate;
_____ if the single package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging the plurality of items in a single package;
_____ if the single package will exceed the desired postal rate,
dividing, based on the selected characteristic, the customer order into multiple sub-orders, each sub-order including a subset of the plurality of items selected so that the sub-order will be at the desired postal rate,
printing a mailer including a control indicia on the mailer,
automatically selecting, based on the control indicia, items for inclusion in each sub-order, and
packaging each of the sub-orders individually so that the customer order comprises multiple packages; and
mailing the single or multiple packages to the customer.

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2. (original) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.
3. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the selected said stored item characteristic includes at least one of:
~~characteristic is chosen from the group comprising:~~ item weight, item thickness and item size.
4. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 further including
~~wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of:~~
printing respective mailers, each mailer corresponding to a package for the shipment, each mailer defining customer selected items to comprise the corresponding package; ~~a mailer for each sub-order;~~
placing each mailer on an assembly line; and
placing each customer selected item in comprising each package
~~sub-order on the associated corresponding mailer as the mailer traverses~~ the assembly line.
5. (original) A method in accordance with claim 4 wherein:
each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer;
each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code
indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side
a customer address.
6. (original) A method in accordance with claim 5 wherein the assembly line comprises:
a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer;
a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like
items; and
a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an
item from a hopper onto a mailer.

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7. (original) A method in accordance with claim 6 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
8. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 7 ~~wherein the further comprising a step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes shrink-wrapping each of the packages sub-orders in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.~~
9. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 4 4 wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of placing each mailer on an assembly line.
~~packaging each of the sub-orders.~~
10. (currently amended) A system for selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising:
 - a processor;
 - a memory connected to the processor, the memory storing data and instructions for controlling the operation of the processor; the processor operative to perform the steps of:
 - storing item characteristics for a plurality of items;
 - storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics;
 - receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for a shipment shipping by mail;
 - ~~retrieving, from the memory, a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items;~~
 - storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to items to comprise the shipment;

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automatically determining a number of packages comprising the shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package :

~~the determining step carried out determining, based on the identifiers and the postal costs for packages, selected characteristic, if a single package containing the plurality of items will exceed a desired postal rate;~~

~~if the single package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging the items in a single package;~~

~~if the single package will exceed the desired postal rate, dividing, based on the selected characteristic, the customer order into multiple sub orders, each sub order including a subset of the plurality of items selected so that the sub order will be at the desired postal rate,~~

~~printing a mailer including a control indicia on the mailer,~~

~~automatically selecting, based on the control indicia, items for inclusion in each sub order, and~~

~~packaging each of the sub orders individually so that the customer order comprises multiple packages; and~~

~~mailing the single or multiple packages to the customer.~~

11. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.
12. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the selected characteristic is chosen from the group comprising: item weight, item thickness and item size.
13. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 further including an assembly line and wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of printing a mailer for each sub-order;
 - placing each mailer on the assembly line; and
 - placing each item in each sub-order on the associated mailer as the mailer traverses the assembly line.

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14. (original) A system in accordance with claim 13 wherein:
 - each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer;
 - each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side a customer address.
15. (original) A system in accordance with claim 14 wherein the assembly line comprises:
 - a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer;
 - a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like items; and
 - a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an item from a hopper onto a mailer.
16. (original) A system in accordance with claim 15 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
17. (original) A system in accordance with claim 16 wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes shrink-wrapping each of the sub-orders in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.
18. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of packaging each of the sub-orders.

19 – 22 (Canceled)